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ROMAN REMAINS,

DISCOVERED IN THE PARISHES OF

NORTH LEIGH AND STONESFIELD,

OXFORDSHIRE,

DESCRIBED IN A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE  
SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES,

BY

HENRY HAKEWILL, Esq.

*(Extracted from Skelton's "Oxfordshire.")*

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## ROMAN VILLA AT NORTH LEIGH.

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THE Map at the head of this pamphlet shows the situations of Roman remains discovered in this part of Oxfordshire.

In the autumn of 1813 several fragments of bricks and tiles of a peculiar form and substance were accidentally observed by the Rev. Walter Brown, on the surface of a field near the banks of the river Evenlode, in the parish of North Leigh, in the county of Oxford, at the distance of about half a mile to the south of the Roman road called the Akeman-street, which runs along the northern boundary of this parish.

The ground in that part of the field where they were found was considerably higher than the natural level of the soil, and had the appearance of four wide ridges enclosing an extensive area. It therefore seemed probable, on the first view, that these ridges had been raised by the ruins of a quadrangular building.

Foundation-walls were soon afterwards discovered on each side of the supposed quadrangle; and as in tracing these walls many tesserae of different sizes and colours were turned up by the workmen, it was concluded, that the building was of Roman origin, and that some of the rooms in it had been decorated with tessellated pavements.

It was found on subsequent inquiry, that the field had been long known by the name of the Roman piece, and that these ruins are noticed in Warton's History of Kiddington, 2d edition, 1783, page 59.

The approach of winter prevented any further examination during that year, and in the next the field was under tillage; but in September 1815 the north side of the quadrangle was examined, and a suite of rooms were found, connected by an interior gallery, or cryptoporticus, which was about 170 feet long and 10 feet wide.

These rooms were then successively laid open, and from time to time the remains of an hypocaust, a very curious bath, several rooms with coarse tessellated floors, and a small one with a pavement of much finer materials, were found; and in the month of October the investigation was rewarded by the discovery of the large room, (Number XXX.) containing a very beautiful Mosaic pavement, 28 feet long by 22 feet wide.

The examination having been continued to the extremity of the cryptoporticus on this side of the quadrangle, the work was suspended, and could not be resumed until the month of June, in the following year, 1816. The western side was now the chief object of attention; and a series of rooms, not inferior to those on the north side, either in size or interest, were discovered, with a cryptoporticus to the east, which was nearly of the same width as the former, but extending in length to 184 feet; and at



the south-western angle a most interesting room, with its hypocaust and flues in the best state of preservation.

It is manifest, from many appearances in this side of the villa, particularly from the remains of rough dry stone walls which had been raised across the floors, and from the stains of fire on some of the tessellated pavements adjoining these walls, that the building had in later times afforded shelter to a very humble class of inhabitants, by whom convenience only was consulted, without any regard to the refinements of taste, or any reverence for ancient grandeur.

The pavement of the room (No. I.) however had shared a better fate ; it seems to have been deeply buried at an earlier period under the ruins of its vaulted roof, and to have been thereby secured from further injury.

The third or south side of the quadrangle was afterwards opened, and when the walls of the rooms and of the gallery had been slightly traced, the workmen were again directed to the north-western angle, where their operations had been discontinued the preceding year.

The baths, (No. XXIV.) with their adjoining apartments and passage, were now discovered, and it was hoped, that the examination of the rooms in this quarter of the building would be completed before the end of the autumn ; but the unusual state of the weather made it almost impossible to superintend the search, and it was therefore thought better to employ the men (where less care was necessary) in tracing the

exterior walls of the building, and particularly these which connected the north and south sides of the villa.

More than one hundred Roman coins, chiefly of small brass, have been found in different parts of the building; many of them are entirely effaced, but most of the following are very perfect.

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Claudius.     | 2. Magnetius.         |
| 2. Carausius.    | 1. Julianus (silver.) |
| 1. Allectus.     | 2. Helena.            |
| 9. Constantinus. | 7. Valens.            |
| 3. Crispus.      | 2. Valentinianus.     |
| 2. Constans.     | 3. Arcadius.          |
| 4. Constantius.  |                       |

The situation of this villa was well chosen; for the little valley in which it is placed, and the scenery round it, are remarkably beautiful. The ground falls gently from the site of the villa to the river, but round the south-west angle of the building it rises abruptly to the brow of the hill which skirts the valley on the south. Standing in the western porticus, and looking eastward, you have the river before you, (within the distance of 180 yards,) which, after winding below a rocky bank to the left, and passing by the front of the villa, turns suddenly to the east, close under a hanging wood, on the steep side of the hill before mentioned. This wood, in the form of an amphitheatre, covers the right bank of the river during its course through the valley. On the left bank there is a level meadow, varying in breadth, but every-where soon rising into a pleasing irregularity of ground, till



the prospect is terminated by a high ridge, on which, in front of the villa, stands the village of Combe, and on the left the woods in the vicinity of Blenheim park.

The origin and course of the discovery having been thus briefly mentioned, I must now beg leave to refer to the following description of the ground-plan, in which, under the numbers with which each room is marked, a particular account is given of every thing found there which seemed worthy of notice.

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#### DESCRIPTION OF THE GROUND PLAN.

No. I. (33 feet long by 20 feet broad,) discovered in June 1816. The pavement of this room was about 4 feet below the surface of the ground. The walls (which are more than 3 feet thick) were in most part sound to the height of 3 feet 6 inches above the pavement, and at the south end rose so high as to be scarcely covered with the soil. The room is divided into nearly equal parts by two walls, projecting 5 feet from the east and west sides. These projections were probably the piers of an arch, as in clearing away the rubbish between them many arch-stones were found, some of which had been made out of fragments of columns, and had the mouldings of bases and capitals on the back of them. In the west side of the north division is a recess of 5 feet. The rubbish within the walls consisted of stones, broken brick funnels, painted plaster, and lumps of coarse mortar or grout ; the latter in such quantities, and in such a form, as to warrant a conclusion, that the ceiling had been vaulted. Much of it was found in large masses intermixed with flat tiles, which, from their wedge-like position, seem to have served the purpose of dividing the case or frame into which the grout had been poured.

The ceiling had been finished with a coating of very thin fine plaster formed into compartments by red, blue, and green fillets, on a cream-coloured ground, and decorated with the foliage of the olive. One piece of plaster shewed the angle of the groin of an arch, with a fillet on each side of it. The sides of the room had also been covered with a thin plaster, and finished in the same manner as the ceiling; and against the angle of the pier, on the eastern side, this finishing remained with the colours very brilliant. Adjoining the floor was a skirting, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick, in the form of a quarter circle, composed chiefly of pounded brick, very hard, and of a red colour. This skirting remains in many parts of the room. Above the skirting the wall was coloured a dark Etruscan brown to the height of 6 inches; there was then a narrow fillet of white, another of the brown, and above them the plaster was an Etruscan yellow. The walls almost all round had been lined with square brick funnels, which went through the floor into the hypocaust; and on the north side of the west pier a very complete specimen of these funnels is still preserved in their original state. Many of them in other parts, notwithstanding every precaution, fell down when the rubbish was removed; but the impression of their form in the plaster shews very plainly where they had been placed, and that they had been continued upward as high at least as the walls remained.

These funnels (which were 1 foot 6 inches in length, with an opening of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches) were set perpendicularly on each other, so as to form a close range of upright flues; between which there was a continual lateral communication by means of small corresponding apertures on the sides of each funnel. On the back and front they were all scored in different figures, for the purpose of giving a firmer hold to the plaster which attached them to the wall, and to that with which they were covered towards the inside of the room: they were confined at the angles of the piers by iron cramps, one of which is still remaining in its place, and several others were found lying in the rubbish. Behind these rows are flues formed by other funnels of larger dimensions (1 foot 6 inches in length, with an opening of  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches by 4 inches) inserted in the wall itself; one on the north side of each of the piers; one about the middle of the east and west walls of the south division; one in the east wall, and



two in the north wall of the north division. As these were found to have the same communication with the hypocaust as the funnels in front, it is very remarkable, that though very few of the latter had the least mark of smoke within them, the former were entirely discoloured by it. Probably the larger ones inserted in the walls were intended to discharge the smoke, and therefore were carried through the eaves of the roof; but the smaller ones being closed at the top, and having no draught through them, would admit only the air which was heated in the hypocaust. The air, thus confined, would communicate its heat through the stucco, with which these funnels were faced, to the inside of the room. There can be no doubt, that by this or some other method the smoke was discharged without entering the room, for there was not the least stain of it on the coloured plaster which had fallen from the ceiling. The hypocaust remains almost as perfect as when it was originally built. The præfurnium (or place where the fire was made at the mouth of it) is in the middle of the south wall, and contained a thick bed of wood-ashes, which extended for some distance under the room. The pillars by which the floor is supported are formed of thirteen flat tiles, 7 inches square, and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick, with two larger tiles, 10 inches square, and 2 inches thick, one at the bottom, and another at the top, so that the height of each pillar, including the thickness of the mortar, is 2 feet 3 inches. On these there are placed still larger tiles, 1 foot 6 inches long, and 1 foot 2 inches wide, which, by their projection, nearly fill up the intervals between the several pillars; and the small vacancy that is left is covered by other tiles, on which there is laid a composition of lime and pounded brick, 6 inches thick, forming the ground for a finer plaster of the same kind, in which the tesserae of the floor are very firmly cemented. There are seventy-nine pillars arranged in straight rows, except on the east side, where, from some want of regularity in their position, a few spaces have been left too wide, and the floor is consequently very weak. In the place of one of these pillars, near the west wall, one of the larger brick funnels filled with mortar has been used. The pillars extend no further than the south division of the room, but under the north division there is a flue in a line with the opening of the præfurnium, which branches off to the different

smoke funnels inserted in the walls. This flue, and its branches, (which are 1 foot 2 inches wide, and 2 feet 2 inches in height,) are made entirely of stone. The ducts of the hypocaust are not extended to the recess, and here of course there is no appearance of any funnels in the walls. The structure of the hypocaust may be best seen from the outside of the room, where, by opening a door which has been put up at the mouth of the *præfurnium*, sufficient light is admitted to show several of the pillars, with the tiles and cement on which the pavement is laid.

The tessellated pavement, with the following exceptions, was sound and perfect. A few tesserae near the middle of the north division of the room were displaced. At the south end, close to the *præfurnium*, the floor had fallen in, but the injury extended no further than the plain red border. Another part of the red border near the west wall had been broken by the failure of one of the pillars of the hypocaust; and on the eastern side, where the irregularity above mentioned occurs in the placing of the pillars, the floor is considerably sunk, but not broken through.

No. II. (30 feet long by 10 feet 3 inches wide) seems to have been an anti-room to that which has been just described. The floor is composed of coarse red tesserae, and is very perfect.

No. III. (9 feet by 14 feet 6 inches) has a plaster floor. The stucco was quite sound upon the wall adjoining No. I. and was coloured of an Etruscan yellow. The skirting was red, and of the same form and materials as that before described.

No. IV. imperfectly examined.

No. V. was a passage of communication. The floor had been tessellated, but so small a part of it remained, that the pattern could scarcely be traced.

No. VI. Another passage.

No. VII. Not examined.

No. VIII. (discovered September 14 1816.) This room is 19 feet long by 16 feet 6 inches wide. The greater part of the pavement had been destroyed; enough remained however to shew the general design of it. This pavement has stone flues under it, similar to those in the north division of the room No. I. but there were no remains of funnels against the walls.



No. IX. is 19 feet long by 16 feet 6 inches wide. The pavement was much broken, and laid upon flues the same as No. VIII. The colours and workmanship of both these are very good, and the cement firm. A small part of the pavement is kept open for inspection.

No. X. is a part of the cryptoporticus in the east front of this side of the quadrangle. At the south end there is a tessellated pavement composed of intersecting circles 2 feet 4 inches in diameter, and extending 25 feet 6 inches; it was then much broken, and its termination could not be exactly ascertained, but it probably ceased nearly at that point, as a pavement of a different design upon a level 8 inches lower was discovered. It was found to go under this pavement; and it continued to a considerable distance to the northward. It is evident that great alterations must have been made on this side of the quadrangle, both from the irregularity which is perceived in this part of it, and from the bottom of the bath which remains at the north end of this cryptoporticus in the rooms No. XIX. and XX.

No. XI. is a continuation of the cryptoporticus; it has a similar tessellated pavement to the lower part of No. X. The two piers projecting into the area are probably the foundations for columns which were placed at this entrance.

No. XII. has not been examined.

No. XIII. has not been examined; but in tracing the interior wall of this room, a small spoon of white metal was found, very sound and perfect. It is pointed at one end, and well formed for the uses mentioned in the epigram.

*Est cochleis habilis, sed non minus utilis ovis.*

Perhaps it has been actually applied to both these uses by the original inhabitants of the villa, for the edible snail (*helix pomatia*) abounds in this neighbourhood; and, as an article of luxury in those times, may have been introduced here by the Romans themselves. I am aware, however, that this kind of snail is said to have been imported into England at a much later period.

Nos. XIV. XV. not examined.

No. XVI. partially examined, and the borders of a tessellated pavement discovered.

No. XVII. A trench has been dug across this room. The floor is of plaster, and was covered in many places with wheat and lentils, black, as if burnt ; the form of the grain however is distinctly preserved. Several specimens of broken pottery were found in this trench, and one small cup nearly perfect.

No. XVIII. Not perfectly examined. The floor is of plaster laid upon stone flues.

No. XIX. is a division at the end of the cryptoporticus. The floor in several places is paved with coarse white tesserae, but not in compartments. At the north end the bottom of a semicircular bath was discovered, which is below the level of the floor, and passes into the adjoining room, No. XX. This must necessarily have belonged to a former building, as the partition wall between this room and No. XX. is built across it.

No. XX. (19 feet 6 inches by 18 feet 6 inches.) The floor of this room is entirely destroyed. The stone flues, however, which supported it, are still remaining.

No. XXI. (19 feet 6 inches long by 7 feet wide.) An anti-room, or passage leading to the adjoining apartments.

No. XXII. This room is 19 feet square ; it has a plaster floor on stone flues : but is not thoroughly examined.

No. XXIII. is the præfurnium to the hypocaust of the adjoining bath.

No. XXIV. This room is 21 long by 17 feet broad, and has two nearly semicircular recesses on the western side. That adjoining the præfurnium contains a warm bath, which is separated from the room by a step raised 7 inches above the level of the floor. There are also two other steps descending into the bath, the whole depth of it being 2 feet 7 inches. Its diameter is 8 feet, and its breadth 6 feet. All round the circular part there is a range of brick funnels of various sizes, remaining very perfect to a considerable height, of which five only are marked by smoke. These funnels, and the whole interior of the bath, are covered with a hard red plaster. A part of a small lead pipe was found near the bottom, passing through the exterior wall to the north-west. The floor of this room has been



tessellated, but in the part adjoining the bath nothing remained except two rows of tesserae, which were found adhering to the wall. The pavement in the north division of the room was in much confusion, having been broken into numberless pieces either by the decay or removal of the pillars in the hypocaust ; but, by a careful and patient examination of the dimensions and position of the large fragments, the design was very satisfactorily made out.

The bases, and part of the pillars in the hypocaust are remaining. The bases were 4 feet 10 inches below the level of the floor, the hypocaust having been necessarily sunk much deeper than that under No. I. in order to admit the heat under the bath, where it is carried by means of three apertures in the division wall, and passes among the short pillars on which the bath is supported to the brick funnels, attached to the semicircular end.

Beneath that part of the floor which lay between the north and south divisions of the room, instead of pillars there are two piers made of tiles, which by gradual projection formed three arched openings, for conveying the heat under the northern division to a range of brick funnels, which had been placed along the north side of it, and all round the recess.

The position of these baths is different from that recommended by Vitruvius, and indeed, from the position in which the baths of a Roman villa are generally found ; for instead of being in the warmest, they are nearly in the coldest aspect of the building. May this difference be accounted for by supposing them to have been used at that time of the year only in which the room, No. XXX. and the adjoining apartments, were inhabited ? There can be no doubt that No. XXX. was a triclinium æstivum. It has its portico towards the north, and there is no provision whatever for warming the floor and walls of it.

The construction of this bath appears to me similar to that of which Seneca mentions the invention in his 90th Epistle. “ Quædam nostra demum prodisse memoria scimus, ut speculariorum usum, perlucenti testâ transmittentium lumen, ut suspensuras balneorum et impressos parietibus tubos, per quos perfunderetur calor qui ima simul et summa foveret æqualiter.” Gruter, in his note on this passage, seems to think, that by “ suspensuræ balneorum,”

Seneca means swinging baths suspended from the ceiling; but Vitruvius applies the word "suspensura" to the construction of the hypocaust under the caldaria; and our common workmen use the same phrase in the present day when they speak of hanging a copper. Besides, Pliny (lib. ix. cap. 54.) refers the invention of the "balneæ pensiles," whatever they were, to Sergius Oratas, about the time of the Marsian war, a century at least before the birth of Seneca.

Among the different methods by which the water was heated for the private baths of the ancients, that which was employed in this seems the most simple and effective. In the economy of fuel, indeed, the construction of it must have been very inferior to one mentioned by Symmachus in his Epistle to Attalus. "Solum hoc fama attulit, balneum tibi nuper extractum; cui torris unus ad justis caloris pabulum satisfacere narratur."

No. XXV. This room is 27 feet 6 inches long by 18 feet wide; the floor has been tessellated; but there is reason to fear that the pavement is destroyed: at present however the room has been only partially opened. On the north side there is a cold bath, 13 feet wide and 18 feet long. It is finished with stucco coloured red in the same manner as the hot bath, and it is connected with No. XXV. by a raised step. There is a lead pipe at the bottom of the bath passing through the wall at the north-east corner.

It is well known that the Romans (like the present inhabitants of Russia) were accustomed to pass almost immediately from the sudatory, or from the warm bath, to the cold bath. The following curious passage in the 9th Epistle of Sidonius describes a singular mode of bathing (on the same principle of transition from heat to cold) in one of the Roman provinces, in the fifth century. "Balneas habebat uterque hospes in opere, in usu neuter. Sed cum vel pauxillulum bibere desiisset asseclarum meorum famulorumque turba compotrix, quorum cerebris hospitales crateræ nimium immersæ dominabantur, vicina fonti aut fluvio raptim scrobs fodiebatur, in quam forte cum cumulus lapidum ambustus demitteretur, antro in hemisphærii formam corylis flexilibus intexto, fossa inardescens operiebatur; sic tamen ut superjectis Cilicum velis, patentia intervalla virgarum, lumine excluso, tenebrarentur, vaporem



“repulsura salientem, qui undæ ferventis aspergine flammatis  
 “silicibus excuditur. Hic nobis trahebantur horæ non absque  
 “sermonibussalsisjocularibusque, quos inter halitu nebulæ stridentis  
 “oppletis involutisque saluberrimus sudor eliciebatur. Quo, prout  
 “libuisset, effuso, coctilibus aquis ingerebamur, harumque fotu  
 “cruditatem nostram tergente resoluti, aut fontano deinceps frigore,  
 “putealique aut fluviali copia solidabamur.”

No. XXVI. (13 feet long by 11 feet 6 inches wide.) The floor has been tessellated ; and where it has been opened guilloch borders remain very perfect.

Nos. XXVII. XXVIII. have not been examined.

No. XXIX. (28 feet 6 inches long by 8 feet wide) has a plain coarse red tessellated pavement.

No. XXX. This room is 28 feet 6 inches long by 22 feet 9 inches wide ; when first discovered in September, 1815, the pavement was entire, except a small part in the south east corner, and a circular compartment in the middle of the room : but such was the eager curiosity of the country people, who, on the Sunday following the discovery, flocked in crowds to the spot, that before any precautions could be adopted the pavement was much injured. What remains will, it is hoped, be protected from farther injury, a building having been erected over the room.

Along the south side there is a considerable depression in the pavement, which, beginning close to the south wall, extends to a distance of 10 feet towards the north. On examining the substratum at the south-east corner, where the pavement was broken, it was ascertained that it was supported by stones placed edgeways on the ground ; and that to the depth of 8 feet the natural soil and rock had been removed, and the cavity filled up with rubbish. Many oyster-shells and pieces of broken pottery were found at the bottom of this cavity ; see the plate showing the section, &c. of the Pavement.

This room has a portico towards the north. The bases and part of the shafts of two columns remain, with an opening of 10 feet 6 inches between them, opposite the centre of the room.

No. XXXI. (28 feet 6 inches long by 9 feet 3 inches wide.) It has a coarse red tessellated pavement.

No. XXXII. (28 feet 6 inches long by 24 feet wide. This room

has been but partially examined : it has a very sound plaster floor ; and the stucco, painted green, was in many places remaining on the walls.

No. XXXIII. (28 feet 6 inches long by 13 feet wide ; ) it has a coarse red tessellated pavement ; a fire had been made upon the floor, and the ashes were remaining.

No. XXXIV. (10 feet long by 8 feet wide.) This room has a plaster floor ; on which also there are many marks of fire, particularly against the middle of the west wall.

No. XXXV. (19 feet long by 3 feet 3 inches wide.) This passage had a pavement of small red, blue, and white tesserae. The wall upon the eastern side appears to have been built across the floor ; but no traces of the pavement were found in the adjoining room eastward. The stucco adhered to the wall on the western side of the passage, and had been coloured red with stripes of black. The remains of the pavement were entirely carried away on the Sunday after it was discovered.

No. XXXVI. An hypocaust 10 feet 8 inches long by 8 feet wide. The upper part of the brick pillars was gone, but the bases remained ; they were 2 feet 6 inches below the floors of the adjoining rooms. The fire was admitted through an opening, made of tiles  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick, in the east wall.

Nos. XXXVII. XXXVIII. not thoroughly examined.

No. XXXIX. This room is 17 feet long by 14 feet wide. There are some subdivision walls which rose but little above the level of the floor, whilst the space between them was nearly on a level with the bottom of the hypocaust, and was filled with ashes ; they were probably the supports to the vessels for the supply of water to the adjoining bath.

No. XL. (17 feet long by 11 feet 4 inches wide.) This room has not been fully examined.

No. XLI. (19 feet long by 13 feet wide.) In the south-east corner of this room there is a bath 6 feet 9 inches long and 6 feet wide ; it is sunk 18 inches below the floor of the room, and is lined with fine white tesserae, very firmly cemented, on a thick plaster, composed chiefly of pounded bricks. The angles at the bottom were formed similar to the skirtings in the other rooms, but made of white tesserae ; there was an opening as if for a lead pipe, going from the



bottom through the north wall. The walls of this bath were probably raised higher than the floor, in the same manner as in the baths No. XXIV. and XXV. for the white tesserae are continued against the south wall 6 inches higher than the others, that wall not being broken down equal with them.

No. XLII. (19 feet 3 inches long by 12 feet 9 inches wide.) This room was very much broken up; there was a firm plaster floor opposite to a wide entrance from the room No. XLI. 1 foot 9 inches below the level of the floor, extending across the room, and about 5 feet wide; the edges were much broken; near the middle of it there was a hole of rough masonry sunk 20 inches below the plaster floor, into which a drain was traced from No. XXXIX. formed on the sides with rough stones, and covered with flat stones, and with a hard plaster bottom. The middle of the room and the south-east angle were entirely destroyed, but in the north-east a plaster floor remained on the level of the pavement of the gallery, extending along the north and east walls in an irregular line towards the middle of the room. It seems probable that the lower plaster floor had been the bottom of a bath, supplied by means of the drain above mentioned.

No. XLIII. (25 feet 9 inches long by 26 feet 9 inches wide,) was slightly examined; a plaster floor was found against the south wall, upon the level of the lower floor of No. XLII. and against the south-east angle there is a pavement of tiles  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches square, and about 1 inch thick, which extended about 4 feet to the westward, and, as far as it was opened, about 3 feet to the northward. These tiles were marked by fire.

No. XLIV. A cryptoporticus, 80 feet long by 8 feet 6 inches wide, paved with coarse red tesserae at the east and west ends; in the middle, for a space of 10 feet 6 inches, the pavement is composed of small red and white squares checquered. This space of 10 feet 6 inches corresponds with an opening between two columns, of which the bases and part of the shafts remain very perfect. The columns are 2 feet in diameter.

No. XLV. A cryptoporticus, 105 feet long and 10 feet wide, paved with red tesserae.

No. XLVI. A continuation of the cryptoporticus, separated from

the former by a wall or step : this had been tessellated, but very little of the pavement remained. It is 53 feet long and 10 feet wide.

No. XLVII. This part of the cryptoporticus has not been sufficiently examined. On the wall next the court the bases of four columns were found similar to those of No. XLIV. ; one of these was in its original position, with part of the shaft remaining ; the others were lying on their sides.

It was at this point that the examination terminated last year ; since which, on removing the ground from the room No. XLIII. two semicircular ends were found similar to those of the baths No. XXIV. ; they were floored with tiles from the pillars of the hypocaust ; the lower parts of which still remain ; evidently the work of some later occupier.

At the south-east corner also an hypocaust with its pillars, and a small bath with a circular end, finished with red plaster, were discovered.

The other divisions of the building, &c. in the ground plan are not numbered or described, as the examination of them did not extend satisfactorily beyond the discovery of the walls, which render the plan of the whole villa complete.

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## ROMAN VILLA AT STONESFIELD.

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STONESFIELD is a village situated about a mile and a half on the west of Woodstock park. The most remarkable antiquity of this place was the Roman tessellated pavement discovered in 1711-12, at which time the investigation did not extend beyond the walls of the room in which the pavement was contained. The pavement was engraved by Vertue in 1712; and an account of it was published in 1713, written by the Rev. John Pointer, of Merton college. In 1779 further examinations took place, the chief object of which seems to have been the discovery of other pavements, without much regard to their relative position, or any attempt to ascertain the general plan and arrangement of the villa. Many beautiful specimens of tesserae were at this time discovered, of which drawings were made by W. Lewington of Woodstock. These drawings are in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries in London.

In the years 1812 and 1813 the rev. Walter Brown and Henry Hakewill, esq. being convinced of the partial and imperfect manner in which these remains had been elucidated, began to make fresh researches, with the view of ascertaining the form and extent of the building, and of getting an accurate ground-plan, which would still further illustrate the domestic habits of its original inhabitants.

During the progress of this operation, (which could not be carried on but at intervals of leisure, and at such times as the tenants of the land could conveniently allow,) these gentlemen thought it would be worth while to ascertain, whether any other vestiges of Roman buildings could be traced in the neighbourhood of this; and it was not long before the ruins of buildings, most probably of Roman origin, were found in each of the adjoining townships of Ditchley and Fawler. See the map. At length, however, what was thus proposed merely as the subject of collateral inquiry became the principal, and indeed the only object of their attention: for the investigation which began at Stonesfield was suspended, in order to examine the remains of the Roman villa which was discovered at the distance of about a mile, in the parish of North Leigh. The result of this examination is given, commencing at page 3. The ground-plan of the Stonesfield remains was so far proceeded with, that the extent of the area was ascertained to be about 190 feet by 152 feet.













































































































































